

Managing Your Kitchen Waste – Large On-site Sewage Systems Best Management Practices (BMPs)



Food scraps washed down the kitchen sink go into the septic tank (on-site sewage system). Too many food scraps will produce high-strength wastewater that can clog pipes, cause back-ups, and lead to failure of the drainfield. Oils and grease are a particular concern. All of this can lead to contaminated drinking water. Use these best management practices (BMPs) to help reduce the strength of your wastewater.

Follow these steps to protect your on-site sewage system and to avoid clogged drains and sewage backups:

- Never put food scraps, oils, or grease down the drain.
- Use filtering drain plugs or screens in your sinks to keep food from going down the drain.
- Limit soda, milk, alcohol, and smaller food particles from going down the drain.
- Scrape and wipe off your pots, pans, and dishes prior to washing.
- Dispose of wipes and food scraps in the garbage or compost bins.
- Use water temperatures of less than 140° F in all sinks and dishwashers. Temperatures over 140° F will dissolve grease, but the grease will re-solidify in piping and your drainfield.
- Use non-toxic, multi-purpose cleaners. Don't use degreasers in sinks. Only use them for spray and wipe purposes.
- Use and dilute cleaners according to their instructions.

Owners should post these tips in community kitchens and provide a copy to all residents and visitors. Post "No Grease" signs above community sinks and on the front of community dishwashers.

For more information visit our website at www.doh.wa.gov/loss or contact the LOSS Program at 360-236-3330 or wastewatermgmt@doh.wa.gov.

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 (Washington Relay) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov.